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HR70-14

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

TELETYPE INFORMATION REPORT

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CLASSIFICATION

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

DISSEMINATION CONTROLS

OUT - DATE - TIME - GROUP

12 DECEMBER 1956

PRECEDENCE

ROUTINE

COUNTRY

EAST GERMANY/USSR

PLACE ACQUIRED

USSR

SUBJECT

COMBAT READINESS OF THE GROUP OF SOVIET FORCES IN GERMANY

DATE OF INFORMATION

LATE NOVEMBER 1956

REFERENCES

APPRAISAL OF CONTENT (TENTATIVE)

3

SOURCE (EVALUATION DEFINITIVE)

A SOURCE PRESUMED TO BE RELIABLE

1. DURING A MEETING OF A COMMUNIST PARTY GROUP (AKTIV) WHICH WAS HELD SOMETIME IN LATE NOVEMBER 1956 AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE GROUP OF SOVIET FORCES IN GERMANY, THE RESULTS OF TROOP TRAINING DURING 1956, THE COMBAT READINESS OF TROOPS AND THE PROBLEMS OF MILITARY AND POLITICAL TRAINING FOR 1957 WERE REVIEWED. AT THIS CONFERENCE MARSHAL ANDREY A. GRECHKO REPORTED THAT TROOP TRAINING IN 1956 CONCLUDED WITH POORER RESULTS THAN WERE ACHIEVED IN 1955. HE CITED A LIST OF UNITS WHICH WERE RATED "SATISFACTORY" AND "GOOD" IN INSPECTION TESTS IN 1955, BUT WHICH WERE RATED "UNSATISFACTORY" FOR 1956. IN ADDITION, COMMANDING OFFICERS ABANDONED MILITARY TRAINING FOR TROOPS AND CARRIED OUT NO MILITARY STUDIES WHEN UNITS OF THE GROUP OF SOVIET FORCES IN GERMANY WERE PLACED ON A WAR FOOTING BECAUSE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN

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POLAND, HUNGARY, AND EGYPT.

2. MARSHAL GRECHKO PLACED SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE STATE OF COMBAT PREPAREDNESS OF TROOPS, AND POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS UNSATISFACTORY. WHEN PRACTICE AND COMBAT ALERTS WERE DECLARED IN CONNECTION WITH THE DEVELOPMENTS MENTIONED ABOVE, TROOPS ASSEMBLED SLOWLY, AND SOME UNITS ARRIVED AT ASSEMBLY AREAS WITHOUT AMMUNITION AND WITHOUT ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF MOTOR FUEL. WHEN A COMBAT ALERT WAS DECLARED DURING EVENTS IN POLAND, FOUR MECHANIZED DIVISIONS OF ONE MECHANIZED ARMY ARRIVED AT THEIR ASSEMBLY AREAS TEN HOURS LATE. THE MARSHAL STATED THAT THIS CANNOT BE PERMITTED UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS.

3. COMMANDERS OF LARGE UNITS HAVE BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO PEACETIME CONDITIONS, THE MARSHAL STATED; FOR EXAMPLE, THE COMMANDER OF ONE MECHANIZED ARMY ASKED THREE TIMES FOR CONFIRMATION THAT IT WAS ACTUALLY HIS ARMY WHICH WAS BEING PLACED ON COMBAT ALERT FOR MOVEMENT TO THE POLISH BORDER. MARSHAL GRECHKO WARNED THAT SOVIET TROOPS HAVE BEEN PREPARING FOR MOVEMENT TOWARD THE WEST, BUT HAVE COMPLETELY NEGLECTED PLANNING FOR MOVEMENT AND DEPLOYMENT EASTWARD. THIS IS WRONG, HE SAID, BECAUSE EVENTS IN HUNGARY AND POLAND HAVE SHOWN THAT THE TROOPS MUST BE PREPARED FOR RAPID MOVEMENT IN ANY DIRECTION.

4. THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF DEFENSE HAS ISSUED AN ORDER CONCERNING THE TRAINING AND EQUIPPING OF TROOPS OF THE GROUP OF SOVIET FORCES IN GERMANY IN 1957. ACCORDING TO THIS ORDER, COMBAT TRAINING OF TROOPS WAS CONSIDERED SATISFACTORY [BY THE MINISTRY IN 1956]. THE ORDER STIPULATES THAT TROOPS OF THE GROUP OF SOVIET FORCES IN GERMANY WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH NEW TYPES OF

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WEAPONS IN 1957. THE BASIC ROLE OF TROOPS IN THIS PROGRAM WILL BE FAMILIARIZATION OF ENLISTED MEN, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, AND OFFICERS WITH THE NEW MATERIEL; THE ORDER MAKES OFFICERS AND STAFFS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRECISE ORGANIZATION OF COMBAT OPERATIONS WHICH INVOLVE THE USE OF MODERN WEAPONS. THE ORDER DEVOTED SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE ASSEMBLY OF TROOPS IN TRAINING ALERTS AND COMBAT ALERTS, EMPHASIZING THAT, IN 1956, NEITHER OFFICERS NOR TROOPS WERE SUFFICIENTLY FAMILIAR WITH NEW COMBAT MATERIEL, AND THAT THEY RESPONDED VERY SLOWLY TO ALERTS. THEREFORE, THERE WILL BE A SERIES OF TRAINING ALERTS FOR THE GROUP OF SOVIET FORCES IN GERMANY. IN WHICH PARTICULAR ATTENTION WILL BE DIRECTED TO LARGE HEADQUARTERS UNITS WHICH ARE SELDOM ASSEMBLED FOR ALERTS. PREPARATION IS NOW UNDER WAY AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE GROUP OF SOVIET FORCES IN GERMANY FOR A TRAINING ALERT.

[REDACTED] COMMENT: EVALUATION REQUESTED OF ARMY.

[REDACTED]

END OF MESSAGE

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